

# The Scholarship Jacket

## RULER Discussion Questions

### R: Recognizing Emotions

*Recognizing emotions in oneself and others*

1. How do the characters in *The Scholarship Jacket* react emotionally to the situations they find themselves in (e.g., Martha's disappointment, the teacher's response)?
2. Can you identify moments when Martha feels a strong emotion? How can you tell what she's feeling? What about the other characters?
3. When you read about Martha's experiences with the scholarship jacket, do any of her feelings remind you of something you've felt before? Can you describe those feelings?

### U: Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Emotions

*Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions*

1. What causes Martha to feel frustrated and upset about not receiving the scholarship jacket? What do you think the consequences are of this emotion for her?
2. How does the principal's decision affect Martha's emotions, and what are the consequences of that decision for her?
3. Why do you think the teacher, Mr. Schmidt, behaves the way he does? What might be influencing his emotions, and how does that affect his actions?
4. Can you think of a time when you were upset or frustrated about something in your life? What caused those feelings, and what did it lead to for you?

### L: Labeling Emotions

*Labeling emotions with a nuanced vocabulary*

1. Martha seems to experience a mix of emotions in the story. Instead of just saying "angry," can you describe the different emotions she feels using more specific words (e.g., frustration, betrayal, disappointment)?
2. How would you describe the emotional state of the teacher, Mr. Schmidt, when he gives Martha the scholarship jacket? What words would you use to label his feelings?
3. When Martha is awarded the scholarship jacket, how do you think she feels? Is it joy, relief, pride, or something else? How can you describe her emotions more precisely?

### E: Expressing Emotions

*Expressing emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context*

1. In *The Scholarship Jacket*, how do the characters express their emotions? Do their expressions match the cultural norms of the setting (e.g., how a student might express

disappointment or pride in this context)?

2. **When Martha is told she will not receive the scholarship jacket, how does she express her feelings? Is her way of expressing emotions appropriate for the situation?**
3. **Think about the emotional expression in the story. If you were Martha, would you have expressed your emotions differently? Why or why not?**
4. **How do you think the other characters (e.g., the principal, the teacher) express their emotions in ways that are culturally acceptable in this story's setting?**

## **R: Regulating Emotions**

*Regulating emotions with helpful strategies*

1. **In the story, how does Martha regulate her emotions when faced with unfairness and disappointment? Does she do a good job of managing her feelings, or does she struggle?**
2. **If you were in Martha's shoes, what strategies could you use to regulate your emotions when you feel wronged or upset?**
3. **Think about the emotional conflict that arises when Martha is denied the scholarship jacket. How could she handle the situation differently if she knew how to regulate her emotions more effectively?**
4. **How do the actions of Mr. Schmidt, the teacher, show the importance of regulating emotions, especially when dealing with students? What can you learn from his approach?**

Bonus Reflective Questions (to tie back to students' personal experiences):

1. **Have you ever faced a situation where you felt your emotions were unfairly ignored or overlooked, like Martha did with the scholarship jacket? How did you handle it?**
2. **Think about a time when someone helped you understand and express your emotions better. What did that look like, and how did it change how you felt?**
3. **What can you do in your own life to better recognize, label, and regulate your emotions in challenging situations, like the ones Martha experiences in the story?**

How to Use These Questions in Class:

1. **Journaling:** After discussing a particular RULER skill, have students write about a character's emotions, their own feelings in similar situations, and what they might do differently.
2. **Group Discussion:** Break the students into small groups and assign each group a different RULER skill to discuss in relation to the characters in *The Scholarship Jacket*. Later, bring the class together to share insights.
3. **Role-Playing:** Have students role-play key scenes from the story. While acting out the scenes, ask them to focus on how their character would regulate their emotions in that moment.